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### *Legislation Directs \$43 Million for Improvements at St. Louis' Cochran VA Medical Center*

(WASHINGTON, DC) - Congressman Russ Carnahan (MO-3) praised the passage of critical legislation that will improve health services for veterans and provide much-needed support services for family and caregivers of disabled, ill or injured veterans. The Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act also directs \$43 million to make facility improvements at the John Cochran VA Medical Center, located in St. Louis.

**"We must make sure that the brave men and women who serve our country have the support they need, both on and off the battlefield,"** Carnahan said. **"That means we must continue to work to improve veterans' health care services, raise salaries for servicemen and women, and help smooth their transition back from the battlefield."**

The Caregivers and Veterans bill will:

- Provide long overdue support to family and others who care for disabled, ill, or injured veterans;
- Enhance health services for the 1.8 million women veterans, including care for newborns for the first time in history;
- Expand mental health services for veterans and health care access for veterans in rural areas; and
- Eliminate copays for veterans who are catastrophically disabled.
- Direct \$43 million to the John Cochran VA Center to construct a new tower for inpatients to stay overnight, build a new ER unit, and expand the women's clinic and research facilities.

Today's vote builds on veterans' measures previously passed by this Congress and signed into law, including the GI Bill of Rights for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, which restores the promise of a full, four-year college education for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, and historic investments to strengthen veterans' health care services.

**"In America, our commitment to our troops doesn't end when they return home,"**  
Carnahan said.

**"We must continue to support the mental health needs of our returning servicemen and women, as well as the families and communities that care for our veterans."**

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